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\* A. CUPID AND THE COMET

LY ANNA S. RICHARDSON

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It bad been bad enough, said the cowboys, to have Buena Vista county turned into a rendezvous for invalids in various stages of hay fever, bronchitls and consumption. It was an outrage to have one's favorite barroom remodeled into a sanitarium, but it was heaping insult upon injury to have a twenty-five horsepower French racer flashing over roads-and good roads, toolong sacred to the festive cow pony.

With Harvey Thatcher, owner of said racer, the good roads surrounding Fort Norton, the county sent of Buenn Vista county, had been the main attraction. When his physicians had ordered Colorado air. Thatcher had stipulated that section of eastern Colorado where the roads would permit him to break the already brilliant record of the Comet. And so it happened that he and his machine, his valet and his chauffeur, were thorns in the flesh of the cowboy element, even as the latter had worried the respectable faction among the early citizens of Fort Nor-

The cowboys had barely become accustomed to the presence of the Comet in their midst and had decided that it might prove dangerous to shoot up a gasoline engine when there arose fresh cause for dissatisfaction. Nan Bearce took to riding in the Comet. And Nan was the prettiest girl in Buena Vista county, or all the adjoining counties, for that matter. She had been the toast of every camp on the range, the belle at every ball, the queen of every county fair tournament in which the cowboys had fought for honors after their own peculiar fashion. Her faback of your eyes? It's your her devotion had gone to her worthvors had been evenly distributed, and liver! Use Ayer's Pills. less father, who ran the one shoe shop of which Fort Norton could boast. A dilapidated, evil smelling den he kept at the end of the street leading north from the postoifice, but the three rooms behind the shop were as fresh and sweet as Nan's stout arms and sunshiny nature could keep them.

There were men, dozens of them, in Buena Vista county who would have



THE MOR CAME UPON THE COMET TWO MILES FROM HETH'S RANCH.

been willing to overlook the father, miserable, drunken wretch that he was, for love of the girl, but she seemed too proud to foist the old man on any of her anxious suitors. The only favor she had ever been known to accept was at the hands of Ben Heth, a stolid, almost morose young ranchman, who had started into the stock raising business in a small way and who held himself aloof from the rollicking, roistering element which had terrorized Fort Norton at regular intervals. When old Bearce had been smitten with smallpox Heth, under cover of darkness, had removed him to his own ranch because of Nan's horror of the pesthouse, and the three had endured the reientless quarantine to-Flast Jordan gether. Then the intimacy had apparently been broken off, old Bearce going back to his bench. Nan to her poverty stricken life and Heth to his lonely ex-Istence on the cattle range.

All this was before Thatcher and the Comet came to Fort Norton. After old Bearce had skillfully mended some rents in Thatcher's leather robes the friendship between the dashing young automobilist from New York and the humble and beautiful daughter of the village shoemaker became town gossip. Women discussed it over their back fences and at the sewing circle of the Union church. Men shook their heads around the stove at Gilbert's general store, and the news spread out on the range. Thatcher was making a fool of Nan Bearce, and there were mutterings that boded ill for the owner of the Comet. The only man who declined to discuss the situation was Ben Heth and that even after Nan and young Thatcher had ridden out to his ranch twice in the devil's wagon, as one old woman called it. To be sure, the chauffeur was in attendance, but what was a chauffeur perched up in the back seat with Nan-enticing, alluring Nan -her soft, brown balr tossed by the wind, her eyes dancing with the exeltement of the run, urging the young New Yorker on to higher speed?

Once they had been seen coming

trying to keep his astonished pony within talking distance of the machine. Parties who had witnessed the scene reported it variously. Some said

that Ben appeared to enjoy the proceeding, more fool he, while others maintained that he was berating Nan for unfaithfulness, even in the pres-

10:19 a. m and 3:57 p: m. But Ben's love affair was utterly for-For Saginaw and Detroit:-10:19 a. gotten in the face of more momentous

events which came with the roundup. The H. O. Cattle company, with which p. m., and 7.39 p. m. Ben had worked before branching out H. F. MOELLER, for himself, discovered what it chose

calves and a corresponding and suspicious increase in calves with the Heth brand. The H. O. brand was a bar with an O on the end. The Heth brand was a dumbbell. Rumor-and rumor in Buena Vista county is an ugly customer-declared that it was easy to change

the bar-O to the dumbbell. The air around Fort Norton became rife with things other than mere rumors, including some very bad whisky. And justice, as drink crazed cow punchers sometimes see it, works with appalling

to designate as a shortage in H. O.

back to town at a slow pace, with Ben

ence of his rival.

Rumors travel faster than half drunken cow punchers who stop at each saloon to drown their threats in bad whisky, and a twenty-five horsepower machine will travel faster than either. That was why the mob that had started out to hang Ben Heth as a sort of climax for the annual roundup came upon the Comet, its owner, his valet and his chauffeur two miles beyond Heth's ranch. They were still hunting for Heth, after having razed his ranch cabin. The Comet was piled high with luggage, a couple of dress suit cases showing above the boxes, and rubber blankets, which filled in the body of the machine. Thatcher explained in a casual way that he was trying some

were bent on more serious work. The Comet shot along the country road, through the soft twilight and the limpid moonlight, straight across the state line into Nebruska. At precisely the same time the Overland limited was carrying a white faced but determined girl over the same state line.

new roads and might be gone a week

or more. The cowboys sent him on

his way with a volley of shots. They

Thatcher insisted upon giving away the bride and receiving the first kiss after the ceremony. He said it was due for excess baggage on the best run the Comet had ever made. Then the great red machine, its owner, his chauffeur and his valet rolled back to Fort Norton without the impressive array of luggage, and Harvey Thatcher, tenderfoot, from New York, announced that when a certain bunch of unmitigated fools had finished their annual spree and had recounted their blankety blank calves the bride and groom would come back to Fort Norton, at which time the damages claimed by said groom for injury done his property and his reputation would be paid or the sheriff of Buena Vista county and one Harvey Thatcher, Esq., would know the reason why, whereupon said Harvey Thatcher promptly rose in the estimation of the cowboy element, and his horseless vehicle was forgiven him,

What We Find In Old Schoolbooks. Along with the writing in old schoolbooks there is more or less drawing. The very early books sometimes have fly leaf sketches of Indians and log houses. The later books, says Leslie's Monthly, have houses of more modern sort, and you find rude drawings of steamboats, horses, birds, flowers, faces and the like. Often a penny or other coin was slipped under the fly leaf and the surface of the paper covering the coin was rubbed with a piece of lead from the schoolboy's pocket or the blunt end of a pencil.

The children had numerous methods for defacing their schoolbooks, and they also had certain devices for keeping them in good order. Many of the older books are protected by an outer cover of sheepskin neatly folded in at the edges and sewed in place with homespun tow. After 1825 this outer covering was apt to be calico, and sometimes there were tie strings attached to the sides. The girls were addicted to the use of a "thumb paper" folded and slipped in where the thumb rested when the book was in use.

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